

Application No.: 09/883144

Case No.: 56731US002

Remarks

Claims 17, 40, 42 and 43 have been canceled. Claims 1, 18, 20-25, and 27 are amended. Claims 44 and 45 have been added. Claims 1-16, 18-39, 41, 44, and 45 are pending.

Claims 20-25 and 27 have been amended to remove the word "material." This amendment was made to ensure that proper antecedent basis exists for the terms "sheet cutter" and "sheet engagement mechanism." These amendments are not intended to, and do not limit the scope of claims 20-25 and 27 as originally presented.

Objections

Claims 3-4, 17, 21, and 40 were objected as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's statement that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 17 depended from claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 17. Please cancel claim 17.

Claim 3 depends from claim 1. New claim 44 has been added, which includes all the limitations of original claims 1 and 3.

Claim 40 depended from claim 18. Claim 18 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 40. Please cancel claim 40.

Claim 21 depends from claim 18. New claim 45 has been added, which includes all the limitations of original claims 18 and 21.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 18, 44 and 45 correspond to claims that the Examiner has indicated would be patentable.

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 1-2, 5-8, 10-12, 14-15, 18-20, 22-24, 27-28, 33-37, and 41-43 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dylla et al. (U.S. 5,322,230) in view of Dylla (U.S. 5,330,125) and Weinberg et al. (U.S. 5,916,651).

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Please cancel claims 42 and 43 without prejudice to filing a divisional application.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 17. Claim 18 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 40. The Patent Office has indicated that these claims would be patentable. (Office Action mailed April 13, 2004; ¶ 5.)

Claims 2, 5-8, 10-12, and 14-15 each depend from amended claim 1 and add patentable features thereto. Claim 1 is patentable for at least the reasons stated above, thus claims 2, 5-8, 10-12, and 14-15 are likewise patentable. Similarly, claims 19-20, 22-24, 27-28, 33-37, and 41 depend from claim 18 and add patentable features thereto. Claim 18 is patentable for at least the reasons stated above, thus claims 19-20, 22-24, 27-28, 33-37, and 41 are likewise patentable.

Claims 42 and 43 have been canceled rendering the rejection with respect to these claims moot.

In summary, the rejection of claims 1-2, 5-8, 10-12, 14-15, 18-20, 22-24, 27-28, 33-37, and 41-43 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dylla et al. (U.S. 5,322,230) in view of Dylla (U.S. 5,330,125) and Weinberg et al. (U.S. 5,916,651) has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 9, 13, 16, 29-32, and 38-39 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dylla et al. (U.S. 5,322,230) in view of Dylla (U.S. 5,330,125) and Weinberg et al. (U.S. 5,916,651), and further in view of Koza et al. (U.S. 5,431,767).

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 17. Claim 18 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 40. The Patent Office has indicated that these claims would be patentable. (Office Action mailed April 13, 2004; ¶ 5.)

Claims 9, 13, and 16 each depend from amended claim 1 and add patentable features thereto. Claim 1 is patentable for at least the reasons stated above, thus claims 9, 13, and 16 are likewise patentable. Similarly, claims 29-32, and 38-39 depend from claim 18 and add patentable features thereto. Claim 18 is patentable for at least the reasons stated above, thus claims 29-32, and 38-39 are likewise patentable.

In summary, the rejection of claims 9, 13, 16, 29-32, and 38-39 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dylla et al. (U.S. 5,322,230) in view of Dylla (U.S. 5,330,125) and Weinberg et al. (U.S. 5,916,651), and further in view of Koza et al. (U.S. 5,431,767) has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

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Claims 25 and 26 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dylla et al. (U.S. 5,322,230) in view of Dylla (U.S. 5,330,125) and Weinberg et al. (U.S. 5,916,651), and further in view of McCormick et al. (U.S. 5,524,844).

Claim 18 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 40. The Patent Office has indicated that this claim would be patentable. (Office Action mailed April 13, 2004; ¶ 5.) Claims 25 and 26 depend from claim 18 and add patentable features thereto. Claim 18 is patentable for at least the reasons stated above, thus claims 25 and 26 are likewise patentable.

In summary, the rejection of claims 25 and 26 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dylla et al. (U.S. 5,322,230) in view of Dylla (U.S. 5,330,125) and Weinberg et al. (U.S. 5,916,651), and further in view of McCormick et al. (U.S. 5,524,844) has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

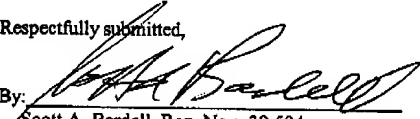
Applicants respectfully submit that the above-described amendments were made to expedite the prosecution of the current application, and do not reflect the Applicants' opinion of the merits of the Patent Office's rejections. These amendments are made without prejudice to the filing of a divisional application.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Allowance of all pending claims, as amended, at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

11 June, 2004
Date

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